The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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"HOW SHALL I KNOW THEE?"

When bright-eyed Faith her starry wings has furled—
When we have laid aside these chains of clay,
And find repose within that viewless world,
Where sorrow cannot come—Ah! who shall say
That we shall meet the loved of earth, and trace
The long-remembered features of each face?

How shall I know thee, when, beyond time's portals,
We meet upon that fair perennial shore—
When this dark dust is changed for the immortal,
And all its weary pilgrimage is o'er—

When I have passed the inner gates of Eden,
Thou standing midst the countless myriads there?
Years may elapse before my soul is bidden
To try the regions of celestial air!

How shall I know thee? Will each well-known feature
Be still unchanged—its loveliness the same?
Or will the angel triumph o'er the creature,
Till there is nothing left me but the name?

When the celestial sound of angel voices,
Like many waters, breaks upon my ear,
And every soul, wrapt in its bliss, rejoices,
How shall I know that thou, the loved, art near?

Shall I not know thee by the bright smile breaking
Like sudden sunlight, o'er thy gentle face,
Delicious memories in my heart awaking
That have been husht within their resting place?

Shall I not know thee when the spark celestial,
Lit at the throne of God, shall waken thee?
That spark, now darkened by the world terrestrial,
Shall flame in beauty in its native air?

Yes! when the pearly gate of heaven uncloses—
When through it burst the floods of living light,—
When on my heart the smile of God reposes,
My weary spirit shall forget its flight,—

And I shall know thee! By the crystal river
Beside whose waves the fadeless roses grow,
We'll yield our heart's warm incense to the Giver,—
Of every earthly good while here below!

—*Julia Ward Howe.* 1846.

THE MIRACLE OF LIFE.

The business of public worship as it is the business of private prayer and communion is to make life more alive. When we come here, or when we go into the closet to pray, it is that the life within us may be stronger to control this mechanism of things. That is to say, religion must magnify the soul which rules, rather than the body which obeys, must turn to the God who creates whenever she speaks of the world which is created. Because language is material, it is easier to look the other way, and to do the other thing. It is easier for men to look on the dust, from which God made them, and in their vulgar way to talk of death and decay. I do not know what else fills literature with the cheap sensation which is always produced by the coarsest description of a death-bed. I do not know why else

even the writers for children gloat over the tales of sickness and other failures of the flesh. For the uses of such writers a dying dog seems better than a living lion. And just as the hateful gossip of a village goes round delighted if she can tell you of the ravages of a new epidemic, and is fairly balked when you can prove to her that the sufferers have recovered, so even the pulpit and the other voices of the church sink into the carnal habit of whining about sin and failure and misery, about sickness and death, about disease of body, mind, and soul with a kind of gusto of delight. As if innocence, courage, and virtue, faith, hope, and love were not the essential and central subjects of their lessons, to which lapse and disease are only incidental and secondary! In a sectarian newspaper the other day I saw a book criticised as unchristian, because its effort was only to show the Christian victories of faith and hope and love. It seemed, forsooth, that it ought to have told how wretched its hero was before he was converted, and from what depths of mercy Christ had saved him. Then, and only then, according to this critic, would it have a truly religious savor.

Against all this heathenism and earth worship, Easter, the Holiday of Life, makes the annual protest; against the habit of considering the machinery; against the microscopic analysis which is satisfied with grovelling in the dust; against the cloister notion that tears are more virtuous than smiles. Easter day reminds us that the Son of Man was Son of God as well. It reminds us that as God's children we have privilege of godly life and godly communion. It lifts us for the day, it would fain lift us for the year, from dwelling among the graves.

The joyous celebration of Easter is not simply the commemoration of the rolling away of the rock from the Sepulchre. It is the celebration of every triumph of the Eternal and Infinite soul of man. A celebration, then, well worth cherishing in an age which is a little too proud of its success in raking over dust heaps, and putting labels on the treasures it finds in them. If we enter into the spirit of the celebration it will help us, as I believe George Herbert says, to look upward more in all this new-born year and to look downward less. It will tempt us in the midst of our study of things and our analysis of their forms, to study even with more eagerness the history of man, and the triumphs over things of the living soul, the child of God. Of course we shall be curious about God's handiwork, curious about the palace in which man the immortal lives. But unless we are fools, our interest in the palace, in its carvings, its fretwork, its pictures, or its dirt and ashes, will not so engross us, but we shall look to see and listen to hear if he who inhabits the palace, if the Sovereign, or some prince of the blood royal, should appear.

Such decision, determination, personal power is it which creates the Christian civilization of all our half the world. America once discovered, every fool could say that the voyage was easy. But the first Columbus! Ah! there is one of the victories of Life. It is the resolute determination of a child of God which sends him forward. It is not climate that makes him. It is not race that compels him or destiny. He is his own destiny. He sees through all the western fogs. He determines. He will carry through. Failure here, failure there, this rebuff, that rebuff,—what are they to an Infinite child of an Infinite God? This thing must be done, shall be done. When the faith and will of such a man speak thus, why, the thing is done. The oceans give a pathway to such a determination, and the new world is thrown open to men who know how to use it. A victory of life over things, over physical laws, over what men call fate or destiny!

Yes, and these achievements are only two little parts of the great achievement of history, of the great central day of which this day is the anniversary. The great event of history is in the great miracle of Life: when to a paralyzed world Jesus Christ said, "Take up your bed and walk," and at his voice that world obeyed. The victory of life over death! Why, to speak of the mere forms of physical being, it seems that the Roman Empire, whose eagles flaunted in a dying Saviour's face, whose soldiers nailed his body to the cross, was at the very instant dying out in its own lusts. It seems that in the direct result of the chosen lawlessness of its being, the people were dying out of it, because with its eyes open it preferred to live for the flesh and sense, and not to live by the spirit and the truth. It seems there were fewer men and women in each century than in the century before. It was to such physical death as that that Jesus Christ spoke the word of more abundant life. And that is only one illustration. It was to such cruelty as permitted parents to kill their own children if they were in the way, it was to such agonies of bleeding hearts as were implied in the worst conceivable system of slavery, it was to such lust in Rome and Athens and Alexandria as repeated the beastly orgies from which

Abraham turned in Ur of the Chaldees, it was from these that Jesus Christ bade the world turn and live; and the world hearing him obeyed. It was from the placid satisfaction in which even the Ciceros and the Aureliuses said, as the Platos and even the Socrates of another generation said, that the great mass of the people were to be rated as the brutes, with lives like theirs, and with rights like theirs and with deaths like theirs, that Jesus Christ called noble and plebeian alike, and compelled each to own that the other was his brother and of the same life-blood.

Yes, and such changes in habit, in thought, and in society are only the faint dawn of the day. Even in our time, though we see a world which with the lip confesses his empire, we know how hollow is much of the confession. "This people honoreth me with their tongue, but their heart is far from me." We know how in Christian Paris, in Christian London, in Christian New York, in Christian Boston, there is heathenism, which, in its horrid way, gives us the suggestions by which we can study that more terrible heathenism of Athens and Rome and Alexandria. Still we have now no fear of the issue. There is a great deal of reconstruction to be done, but the victory is sure, and we know it. We know what Cicero and Aurelius did not know, that in this world God's Kingdom steadily comes. We know that this Easter day shines on a nobler world than that of a century ago. We know that that Easter day was brighter than that of the century before. We know we need no demonstration, that our children's children, a century hence, will look back on the Christian civilization of to-day, amazed, indeed, that we should think it worthy of congratulation.

And all this is the victory of Life—yes, of one Life. It is the victory of him who is Lord of Life, of whom that title is the highest title and the proper name. It is not in any physical law of gulf streams, of tidal currents, of simoons, of the world's attractions in its orbit, or of the perturbations in its planetary career that such changes come. They are the victories of the Spirit. They are the conquests of Life. Into this world came that Son of God, who knew God most completely.

And he said, "I have come that this world might have life, and might have it abundantly."

And he lived, and he died, and this day he rose again.

Because he lived, this world begins to live truly. And of its Spiritual birth this day is its anniversary!—*Edward Everett Hale.*

THE STILL HOUR.

SHORT PRAYERS.

O Thou, who art light, and in whom is no darkness at all, may we walk in the light, and have fellowship with thee.

Blessed be the God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

May we all become a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, and to show forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

May we follow him who has suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps, and being dead to sin should live to righteousness; when reviled, may we not revile again, but by well-doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; may we refrain our tongue from evil, and our lips that they speak no guile; may we sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, so that all may be ashamed who falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ.

Grant, O Lord, that, if it be thy will, we may suffer for well-doing rather than for evil-doing.

May the time past of our lives suffice us to have disobeyed thee; for the time to come may we be sober and watch unto prayer; may we have fervent charity among ourselves; that God may in all things be glorified through Jesus Christ.

May the God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that we have suffered for a while, make us perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us, and to him be glory and dominion forever. Amen.

We are required to seek peace. Of whom, then, can we seek it with expectation to find it, but of him who is a God of peace, and hath promised to bless his people with peace? It is God who hath promised to give his people one heart and one way; yet for these things he will be sought unto. Oh, then, let us seek peace and pray for peace, because God shall prosper them that love it.—*John Bunyan.*

The world rings with clamor and brawls, but the Church ought to be a quiet spot; it is that tabernacle where God hides us secretly from the strife of tongues, where we can sow and reap beside the waters of peace.—*Charles Bigg.*

Well, then, you people of God, what a surpassing comfort is this, that all your times are now in your Redeemer's hands! —*Alexander Whyte.*

OUR HOPE OF PEACE.

To guide our feet into the way of peace. —*Luke* i. 79.

THOUGHTS FOR THE STILL HOUR.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.—LEVIT. xix. 18.

"Having love, be sure to give it,
Give it, having not;
For in living through our giving
Share we Christ's own lot.
Love for every unloved creature,
Lonely, poor or small!
Christ was born to show how truly
Love makes Life for all."

—*E. T. Leonard.*

The days are indeed evil, unless we make them good.—*George Hodges.*

PRAYER IN WAR TIME.

From trouble and the noise of strife we turn, O Lord, to thee, our refuge and our hope. Let peace rule in our hearts amid the cries of war, while we wait for the triumph of thy Kingdom. Bring thine own will to pass in the changes that must come. Remember all who are caught unwillingly in the net of war—those who go forth, and those, most troubled, who must wait upon the event at home. Be with the wounded in their pain; and with the sorrowing, to sustain them in their anguished and lonely hours. Let hate and envy die out of men's hearts, and peace and kindness reign. Go with us through the darkness of our suspense and perplexity. Make us lovers of justice between man and man. Give us courage to go on in thy companionship with full assurance that thy patience fails not nor is ignorant of the means and of the end. In the name of Christ. Amen.

—*Isaac Ogden Rankin.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Mrs. Haynes has been gone for more than five years, but the boys desire the continuance of the paper in memory of their mother. My oldest son is taking great pleasure in sending this list of books.

With great appreciation of the many kindnesses of which we have been the recipients at the hands of the Cheerful Letter Exchange circle, I am sincerely yours, W. T. A. Haynes.

"Tip Cat," "Four Winds Farm," Mrs. Molesworth; "The House in the Glen," "One of the 28th," G. A. Henty; "Ten Boys who lived on the Road from Long Ago to Now," Jane Andrews. Apply to W. T. A. Haynes, Jr., 804 Riverview Avenue, Portsmouth, Virginia.

Mrs. L. L. Hawes, 164 Highland Avenue, Somerville, Mass., offers German papers.

The Belmont Branch offers the following. Apply to Miss Bessie Elliott, Belmont, Mass.: *House and Garden Magazine*, December, 1912–May, 1914; *The Garden Magazine*, April, 1913–April, 1914; *Suburban Life*, April, 1913–May, 1914; *Scribner's*, 1914; *Sunset, The Pacific Monthly*, 1913 and 1914; *Good Housekeeping*, 8 numbers of 1913, 7 numbers of 1914; *Current Opinion*, March, 1913–December, 1913; *Current Opinion*, 1914; *Pictorial Review*, October, 1913–December, 1914.

Miss Lucy F. Young, 5 Central Street, Winchester, Mass., offers a French and a German Testament.

Cambridge First Parish offers the following books. Apply to Miss Helen Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.: "The Princess," Tennyson; "Selected Poems of Burns and Scott"; "The Trail to Boyland" (poems), Nesbit; "A Gift of Love" (poems); "A Day with Hawthorne"; "Memoirs of Governor Andrew"; "The Foot-path Way," Torrey; "A New England Nun," Wilkins; "Jupiter Lights," Woolson; "Jane Cable," McCutcheon; "The Woodfire in No. 13," Hopkinson Smith; "The Heart of Lady Anne," Castle; "Olive," Muloch; "The Air-Ship Boys," Taylor; "Captain of the Crew," Barbour.

REQUESTS.

1. Miss Susan Rice, Highlands, North Carolina, asks for any of the following: "God and the Soul," Armstrong; "The Crisis," Churchill; "Around the World with a King," Armstrong; "Japanese Girls and Women," Bacon; "Evangeline," Longfellow, or Longfellow's complete works. Her sister, Miss Rosa Rice, Highlands, North Carolina, would be glad to get *Literary Digest, Christian Herald, Sunset, Pictorial Review* for 1915 when read. Her nephew, Harold Rideout, fifteen years old, Highlands, North Carolina, would like *Youth's Companion* for 1915 when some one is through with it. Bert Rideout, his brother, twelve years old, would like *American Boy* for 1915 when some one is through with it. Miss Rice writes: "I have asked for quite a lot, but send only such as you have; all you may send will be greatly appreciated."

2. Mrs. A. C. Hottinger, Thornville, Ohio, R. 5, bedridden and helpless, whose birthday is April 4, would be glad to have the friends remember her with books, letters, and cards. Anything will be highly appreciated, as her life is very sad.

3. As I stay at home with my mother who is ill, I spend my spare time in reading, and enjoy it very much. I am sixteen years old, and as I have no young girl friends near me I should like to receive post-cards, "The Rosary," "The Pathfinder," and *McClure's Magazine*. My pastor is Rev. J. M. Alderman, Delway, North Carolina. My address is, Mary Lou Cobb, Kerr, R. F. D., North Carolina.

4. Miss E. D. Daniel, Don, Virginia, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal* or any story magazine.

5. Mrs. Annie Simpson, Farmville, R. D. 5, Virginia, asks for "Life of McKinley" and a book of Fables or Fairy Tales.

6. I wish to thank the lady who sent me *The Ladies' Home Journal* until February, 1915. I have lost her address or I would thank her by letter. I enjoyed the magazine so much and should like to have it again, beginning with the March number. I also thank the donor of the *Cheerful Letter*, and all who have sent me cards and reading matter. May God bless the *Cheerful Letter* people for the good work. (Mrs.) A. E. Hicks, Monroe, R. F. D. 1, Virginia.

7. Miss Pearl Payne, Tryon, Nebraska, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal* and other reading for her mother and brother.

8. It has been several years since I have received any reading matter from the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I have four children, aged ten, eight, six, and four years. I should like some suitable books for children, also some for myself. Letters and cards would be appreciated. Mrs. Lou N. Turner, Dodson, R. F. D. 1, Virginia.

9. Nellie Holley, Snowsville, Virginia, a girl of seventeen, an orphan working for a home, needs a friendly word of cheer.

10. Mrs. Elizabeth Curtis, Tellico Plains, R. D. 1, Tennessee, asks for "Story of Abraham Lincoln."

11. Will some one please send me "Ben Hur" and the *Youth's Companion* beginning with January 28? It has been coming regularly till then, and my oldest boy of twelve years likes it so much and does not want to miss a single copy. So, will some one please send it to him? And I should be glad if some one would send good reading to Mrs. Belton Lenier, Athens, Texas, R. 2. Thanking you for past favors, I am Mrs. Wade Owens, Athens, Texas, R. 2.

12. I am married and have three sweet little children, and I should very much appreciate good reading. Mrs. T. K. Smith, Polkton, R. D. 2, North Carolina.

13. Please let me thank the sender of the *Cheerful Letter*. My husband and I appreciate it very much and should be glad to continue receiving the paper and also any other reading matter. Should especially like to receive the *Delineator, Good Housekeeping*, or *To-day's Magazine*, after some one has read them. Should like to have the one who is sending the *Cheerful Letter* to Grayce Tennyson, Shawnee, Oklahoma, change the address to Mrs. Grayce Tennyson Hutchins, Newalla, Oklahoma, R. R. 1. From Mrs. Grayce T. Hutchins, R. R. 1, Newalla, Oklahoma.

14. Mrs. G. M. Horlley, Blowing Rock, North Carolina, a young woman who helps her husband earn a living for the family in the mountains, would welcome good reading for a Rest Room.

15. *Dear Cheerful Letter friends,*—Words cannot express the thankfulness I feel to you all for the nice things you sent for our Christmas-tree. We had fifty children and several old people, and something for every one. Several of the store-keepers in town heard of my tree and sent candy and fruit; and I bought some, too. We all had such a nice time; and I am sure you will all be glad to know your presents gave so much pleasure. I am in a lot of trouble. Four weeks ago my husband had a light stroke of paralysis. I read to him a great deal, and I hope my friends will not forget us. Any good reading matter that you may have to spare I shall be so glad to get. He likes tales of adventure and hunting, and humorous stories. Thank you all for the religious literature you have sent me. He enjoys that, too. May God bless you all. Mrs. J. Porter, Deorum, R. F. D. 3, Colquitt County, Georgia.

16. Mrs. H. C. Sanborn, East Thetford, Vermont, is anxious to obtain the February, March, April, and May numbers of *American Motherhood* for the year 1906.

17. Miss J. Rives Layne, Amherst, Virginia, R. F. D. 1, Box 56, wishes for her invalid aunt "Innocence Abroad" and "Handy Andy."

18. Mrs. Leila A. Hall (B. J.) asks reading for herself and children.

19. Mrs. Z. T. Stone, Ridgeway, Virginia, R. F. D., will appreciate reading for herself and husband.

20. Mrs. F. W. Newell, Eureka, Kansas, asks for light reading. She is lonely, her husband being away from home much of the time

21. Mrs. Susie D. Smith, Eureka, Kansas, an invalid and shut-in, wishes to thank Miss Withede and Mrs. Smith for their kindness, and asks for a dictionary and a Bible with large type.

22. Mrs. Kate D. Stafford, Tennessee Colony, Texas, Anderson County, and her husband, both lonely and in poor health, will be very grateful for books and magazines. Mr. Stafford has been unable to do any work for sixteen months, and as they live alone, sixteen miles from the city, they find reading a comfort. Mrs. Stafford also writes of a neighbor whose wife died, leaving three boys and one girl. The girl loves to read and would be glad to get anything like *St. Nicholas* or the *American Boy's Magazine* and *Youth's Companion.* The girl is eleven; the boys (twins) are thirteen, and the little fellow nine. If things are sent to Mrs. Stafford, she will be sure they receive them.

23. Rev. D. J. Bryant, Floyd, Virginia, says he wishes to thank the *Cheerful Letter* for the commentaries on Matthew, Luke, John, Acts, and Romans, and the other important reading that has been sent him during the winter. He would be pleased to receive other commentaries and a Bible Dictionary, and he hopes those who have sent him good papers and magazines will continue sending them.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Miss Lena Kendall is now Mrs. Tyson, Ansonville, North Carolina.

Mrs. James A. Tyner is now at 1205 East Loula Street, Olathe, Kansas.

AT REST.

Mrs. Emma J. Hoyt, of Fort Fairfield, Maine.

Amy Lane, Stockton Springs, Maine.

Mrs. Jennie Pleasants.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

(*Continued from March number.*)

It isn't the ideal solution, of course. This mother thinks, and I agree with her, that a series of baby-gardens, placed conveniently about the towns and cities, where children could be left in the care of trained experts for as many hours a day as necessary, at a fixed charge per hour, would help solve the rights of the child and the rights of the mother in the matter of room; and such baby-gardens are feasible in any town or village of five hundred inhabitants or more. But naturally they can't be established if women persist in staying mentally inside their ancestral caves, like prehistoric troglodytes.

These baby-gardens would at least solve the problem of the child's right to safety, for in any modern kitchen a child can get as badly burned or cut in a minute as it can in a year. I imagine we have all

thought and talked of a room for little children in which no one would ever have to say "No" to them, because there was nothing in it that could hurt them and nothing that they could harm. After my experience as nurse-maid in a dozen or more families, in which I seemed to spend all my waking hours saying, "Don't!" I began to think that this accident-proof room was the greatest need of the home; but I have grown to feel that such a place would have its own peculiar risks. It would give the children present safety, but at the cost of future danger, like keeping them out of the water until they could swim.

For after all, we have to learn to get along in a world full of things with sharp corners, of things that drop and tip over and break and spill, of things that burn and cut; and it is part of the business of growing-up to learn how to navigate our way through them. The bull in the china shop wouldn't have made himself nearly so unpopular if he had been brought up among dishes from his calfhood. The danger-proof nursery is really a parent-saving device, and it is a question just how far it can be wisely used without detriment to the future welfare of the child.

Then there is the case of the nursery *versus* the parlor—which of these two shall become the modern living-room? We all know what it means to go to a friend's house late in the afternoon, stumble over a broken roller-skate at the front door, dodge a train of cars tooting down the hall, circle round a tottering pile of building-blocks on the rug, and sink into the lap of a doll in the Morris chair. Such conditions don't give the mother and father a fair chance, any more than the perpetually swept and garnished, closed and shuttered parlor is fair to the child who is only allowed to slip about, mouselike, in the dim background. The adjustment between parlor and nursery can be worked out on a sort of time schedule, however. I once knew a family which allowed every bit of the "down-stairs" except the dining-room to be a romping, roaring play-room until five o'clock in the afternoon, when there was a quick picking up and clearing away by all hands, and a house set suddenly in order and at peace. The children did not always like to be subdued at that hour; there was considerable "flutteration" at times. But it was part of the adjustment that had to be made. The mother did not always remain content with the simplified furnishing she was obliged to use; she sometimes longed for more beautiful and more perishable things. But as the possession of these would have made the children's play impossible, she gave them up as her part of the compromise. —*Martha Hensley Bruère, Good Housekeeping.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE ROBIN.

Description: Robin (*Merula migratoria*). Male—Head and sides of throat black; centre of throat white streaked with black; upper parts dark slaty brown; tail black, when widely spread showing a spot of white on tip of each outer tail feather; wings slightly darker than back; under parts rufous except lower abdomen and under tail coverts, which are white; in fall and winter the feathers of breast and belly broadly tipped with white; bill yellow; feet and legs dark; length from tip of bill to end of tail, 10 to 11 inches. Female—Same as male except the whole plumage is distinctly lighter. Nestlings—Conspicuously streaked above with buff and heavily spotted above and below with black.

Western Robin (*Merula migratoria propinqua*). The western robin differs from the eastern bird in being slightly larger and having less white on the outer tail-feathers, often lacking it entirely.

Distribution: The Robin (*migratoria*) is found in all portions of North America east of the Rocky Mountains, from the Gulf of Mexico to Alaska, and breeds in all of this great region that lies north of a line running through Kansas and Virginia, excepting the extreme northeastern Arctic regions. It winters sparingly in sheltered localities to about 44 degrees north, but the great body of birds spend the winter months in the territory between 36 degrees north and the Gulf of Mexico.

The Western Robin (*propinqua*) is found in the territory lying west of the east base of the Rocky Mountains from British Columbia south to Oaxaca, Mexico.

Nest: Is built of coarse grass, leaves and rootlets, usually cemented together with mud, and lined with finer material of the same kind as the foundation.

Eggs: Light greenish blue, usually varying from three to five in number.

The Economic Value of the Robin.

The robin in most parts of the country is too common a bird to need an introduction to any one except an urbanite. However, even those who think that they have nothing to learn about the robin will be surprised how much of interest and value can be gleaned

by a systematic study of the life history of this species during an entire year. Let this embrace notes on the migration, courtship, home building, food, both for young and adults, how long before young can care for themselves, how many broods in a season, habits after breeding season, etc. Such records will serve to remove any prejudices and give an amount of real pleasure that cannot be appreciated until realized by actual participation. Moreover, such a complete and intimate knowledge of a bird will excite a desire for facts regarding other species which can better be obtained by observation than from books, and thus the observer will soon be able to name all the common resident birds of his locality and know their relations to mankind. The more a person investigates nature the broader, fuller, and more complete becomes his own life, and in proportion to his subjugation of nature is his own development, physically, mentally, and morally.

Wherever the robin breeds within the confines of civilization, man is its friend, and a mutual attachment has grown up that borders on sentiment. The man extends his protection and the bird rewards by making his home almost under the same roof tree, displaying a confidence in his human brother that is begotten by lack of fear.

In the robin's winter home in the southland all is different, for there no sentiment but that of gastronomics is displayed; the bird is simply a tender morsel to be made an integral part of a stew or a pie. In Central Tennessee are large tracts of cedars, the berries of which serve to attract myriads of robins in the winter. One small hamlet in this district sends to market annually enough robins to return $500, at five cents per dozen, equal to 120,000 birds. My informant naïvely says: "They are easily caught at night in the roost in young cedars; we go to the roost with a torch and kill them with sticks, others climb the trees and catch the robins as they fly in." One of the officers of the Louisiana Audubon Society furnishes the following information regarding robin slaughter in his own state: "They are commonly killed for home consumption and for marketing, a conservative estimate of the number killed annually being from a quarter of a million in ordinary years to a million when they are unusually plenty. During the past winter one gunner killed over 300 robins in one day, and in one village in the state the boys and young men are vying with each other for a record in robin killing, the present high score being 200 birds in one day." Better, by far, sentiment than slaughter, as the one preserves and the other destroys what is of great value, as will be proven later.

Food for the Year.

Month	Stomachs exam'd	Insect Food	Wild Fruit	Cult'd Fruit	Miscl. Veg. Food	Total
Jan....	36	6.11	87.64	–	6.25	100
Feb....	6	46.83	44.67	–	8.50	100
Mar....	33	62.15	33.39	–	4.46	100
April...	60	69.73	7.17	–	23.10	100
May....	12	84.58	3.75	–	11.67	100
June....	18	51.44	19.33	29.17	.06	100
July....	26	42.12	25.42	30.38	2.08	100
Aug....	56	48.66	49.20	.34	1.80	100
Sept....	26	32.04	66.23	–	1.73	100
Oct....	44	5.66	94.34	–	–	100
Nov.....	7	45.71	54.29	–	–	100
Dec....	6	30.33	33.34	33.33	3.00	100
Total..	330	43.78%	43.23%	7.77%	5.22%	100%

That the robin is a very beneficial bird there is no doubt, although it is claimed by some persons, especially small fruit growers, that it eats cultivated fruit to an injurious extent. This charge, the evidence shows, is confined to special localities and to a very limited period, and is not at all general.

The table of food for the year shows that cultivated fruit is only eaten to any serious extent during the months of June and July, when it amounts to 30 per cent.; however, during the same months the insect food amounts to over 46 per cent., thus showing the benefit to largely exceed the damage. The cultivated fruit eaten in the month of December was necessarily waste fruit that was left on trees or vines as worthless.

In the Southern country, where the robin receives no protection whatever, it cannot be claimed that it eats cultivated fruit, as the bird is not resident there except in the winter, when fruit is not in season.

The horticulturist can protect his small fruit crops by growing a few wild fruits for the robins, and the cultivated kinds will not be disturbed; but thousands of injurious insects will be eaten that would otherwise be a pest.

A careful study of the food tables abstracted from data furnished by the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, ought surely to convince every one that the robin is a very valuable aid to the agriculturist, and therefore ought to be carefully protected. The 330 stomachs examined were collected in the territory between Massachusetts and Kansas, and Canada and the Gulf States, excepting a few from California. The contents, therefore, must show in a fairly conclusive manner the food that the robin

eats during the year. The wild fruit that the robin eats does not affect the relation of the bird to man either way: it is simply one of the methods that Nature provides to distribute seeds of plants.

An analysis of the 44 per cent. of the robins' food consisting of insects is not only of interest, but is instructive, as it serves to show that during the whole year the average is well kept up. Beetles of various kinds (Coleoptera) form nearly 19 per cent. of the food for the year, in May reaching a maximum of over 53 per cent., which is largely of May beetles (Lachnosterna). There are over sixty species of this genus in the United States, all of which are harmful. The adults sometimes completely defoliate small trees and do great harm to large ones. The larvæ of these beetles are known as "white grubs," and are often great pests, especially in strawberry plantations and in pastures, where they destroy the roots of the grasses. Grasshoppers and crickets (Orthoptera) are also eaten to a considerable extent, over 9 per cent. being the average for the year; in August they comprise over 30 per cent. of the food. Both of these classes of insects are serious pests, and any bird that destroys them is too valuable to kill.

The other 17 per cent. of the insect food consists of moths and butterflies (Lepidoptera), bees, wasps, and ants (Hymenoptera), bugs, aphids (Hemiptera), etc. Many larvæ of the owlet-moths (Noctuidæ) are eaten, a family which includes caterpillars so well known and dreaded by the name of "cut worms." One robin had no less than 40 army worms in its stomach and another contained 125 March flies (Bibio). Some of these latter destroy the roots of growing plants, especially grass. The wise farmer and plantation owner will use every means in his power to encourage the robin to remain on his premises, for by so doing myriads of noxious insects will be destroyed.

Study Points for Teachers and Scholars.

Trace the distribution of the robin on the map of North America. During what months in the year is it with you? When does it arrive, in the spring or fall? When does it leave you? Do you ever see large flights of them? At what season of the year? Does the robin walk or hop? Name the wild fruit that the robin eats. Can you identify any of its insect food? Give some interesting facts regarding the breeding habits of the robin, nest building, location of nest, etc.

For studies of robins' roosts, read article by William Brewster, in *The Auk*, vol. x, pp. 360–373, and by Bradford Torrey, in "The Foot-path Way," 1892, pp. 153-175.—*William Dutcher.*

BIOGRAPHY.

LA FAYETTE.

(Continued from March Number.)

Washington was at headquarters when La Fayette reached Philadelphia, but he was daily expected in the city. The introduction of the youthful stranger to the man on whom his career depended was therefore delayed a few days. It took place, in a manner peculiarly marked with the circumspection of Washington, at a dinner party, where La Fayette was among several guests of consideration. Washington was not uninformed of the circumstances connected with his arrival in the country. He knew what benefits it promised the cause, if his character and talents were adapted to the course he had so boldly struck out; and he knew also how much it was feared that the very qualities which had prompted him to embark in it would make him a useless and even a dangerous auxiliary. We may well suppose that the piercing eye of the father of his country was not idle during the repast. But that searching glance before which pretence or fraud never stood undetected was completely satisfied. When they were about to separate, Washington took La Fayette aside; spoke to him with kindness; paid a just tribute to the spirit he had shown, and the sacrifice he had made in the American cause; invited him to make the headquarters of the army his home, and to regard himself, at all times, as one of the family of the commander-in-chief.

It was on the 31st of July, 1777, that La Fayette received, by a resolution of Congress, his commission as a major-general in the American army. Not having at first a separate command, he attached himself, as a volunteer, to the army of the commander-in-chief. On the 11th of the following September, he was present at the unfortunate battle of the Brandywine. He there plunged, with a rashness pardonable in a very youthful commander, into the hottest of the battle, exposed himself to all its dangers, and exhibited a conspicuous example of coolness and courage. When the troops began to retreat in disorder he threw himself from his horse, entered the ranks and endeavored to rally them. While thus employed he was shot by a musket

ball through the leg. The wound was not perceived by himself till he was told by his aid that the blood was running from his boot. He fell in with a surgeon, who placed a slight bandage on his limb, with which he rode to Chester. Regardless of his situation he thought only of rallying the troops, who were retreating in disorder through the village; and it was not till this duty was performed that the wound was dressed. It was two months before it was sufficiently healed to enable him to rejoin the army. This was the first battle in which he was ever engaged, and such was his entrance into the active service of America.

It is impossible in this sketch to do more than glance at the military services of La Fayette, in our revolution. He was in the battle of Monmouth, where he displayed the utmost courage and skill. On the arrival of the French, under D'Estaing, at Rhode Island, he was detached to join them with the army under General Sullivan. He was here exceedingly useful in securing harmony between the French and American forces. In 1779 he embarked for France, that country now being in a state of declared war with England. He was received in his own country with enthusiasm by the people, and with favor by the court. He turned to the advantage of America the influence he had acquired. It is not easy to over-estimate the service he thus performed in our behalf, for it was chiefly through his influence that the effective aid of France was secured.

He returned to America in 1780, and was at West Point when the treachery of Arnold was discovered. The following winter he was at the head of his division in Virginia. During the summer of 1781, he conducted the campaign in that State with a vigor and success which showed that he possessed the highest qualities of a general. In the confidence inspired by his powerful army, his great experience, and superior abilities, Lord Cornwallis declared that "the boy should not escape." He did escape, however, and it was in a great degree owing to the conduct of the youthful general that the British commander was soon after obliged to lay down his arms, and surrender his whole force of seven thousand men to the combined armies. In the memorable siege of Yorktown, which resulted so gloriously, La Fayette took an active and efficient part, and obtained a due share of renown.

Spain had now shaken off her indifference, and concluded to join with France in the attempt to humble Great Britain. A powerful fleet was assembled at Cadiz, which, with twenty-four thousand troops, was to proceed to make a descent on the island of Jamaica, and then strike upon the British Army at New York. La Fayette proceeded to Europe to aid the expedition, and, at the head of eight thousand men, went from Brest to Cadiz. But these mighty preparations were seen by Great Britain, and, guided by a wise prudence, she consented to peace.—*From "Lives of Benefactors," Author of Peter Parley's Tales.*

(To be continued.)

EASTER.

Do saints keep holy-day in heavenly places?
Does the old joy shine new in angel faces?
Are hymns still sung the night when Christ was born,
And anthems on the resurrection morn?

Because our little year of earth is run,
Do they keep record there beyond the sun?
And, in their homes of light so far away,
Mark with us the sweet coming of this day?

What is their Easter? For they have no graves;
No shadow there the holy sunrise craves,
Deep in the heart of noontide marvellous,
Whose breaking glory reaches down to us.

How did the Lord keep Easter? With his own!
Back to meet Mary where she grieved alone;
With voice and mien all tenderly the same,
Unto the very sepulchre he came.

Ah, the dear message that he gave her then,
Said for the sake of all bruised hearts of men!—
"Go tell those friends who have believed on me,
I go before them into Galilee.

"Into the life so poor, and hard, and plain,
That for a while they must take up again,
My spirit passes. Where their feet toil slow
Mine, shining swift with love, still foremost go.

"Say, Mary, I will meet them; by the way,
To walk a little with them; where they stay,
To bring my peace. Watch, for ye do not know
The day, the hour, when I may find you so!"

And I do think as he came back to her,
The many mansions may be all astir
With tender steps that hasten in the way,
Seeking their own upon this Easter Day.

Parting the veil that hideth them about,
I think they do come, softly wistful, out
From homes of heaven that only *seem* so far,
And walk in gardens where the new tombs are.

—*A. D. T. Whitney.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

BIRD-GUESSING CONTEST.

1. A flash of sky on wing.
2. Oh, shall I call thee bird,
   Or, but a wandering voice?
   Thy note from household clocks is heard
   And children's ears rejoice.
3. King of the water, as the air,
   He dives and finds his prey.
4. Thy plaintive cry announces punishment,
   And warns the luckless boy for whom 'tis sent.
5. You introduce yourself throughout your song,
   And tell the world your brief, old-fashioned name.
6. "Bob White" you call
   Along the marshy coast.
   Speak not so loud
   Or you will be on toast.
7. Cooing 'neath barn rafters,
   Pouting, sometimes, too;
   Rippling like child laughter
   All the winter through.
8. An English emigrant, bird of the street,
   So common that some like thee not at all.
   Yet in the Holy Bible we are told
   The Father careth if but one should fall.
9. Red-breasted harbinger of spring
   We wait in hope to hear thee sing.
10. At some glad moment was it Nature's choice
    To dower a scrap of sunset with a voice?

—*Selected.*

II.

A DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. The definite article.
3. The plural of this.
4. The place where dramatic performances are exhibited.
5. A girl's name.
6. To fall into error.
7. A vowel.

III.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

Famous Men born in April.—Each number represents a corresponding letter in the alphabet.

20, 8, 15, 13, 1, 19 10, 5, 6, 6, 5, 18, 19, 15, 14. A President of the United States.

5, 4, 23, 1, 18, 4 5, 22, 5, 18, 5, 20, 20 8, 1, 12, 5. A Unitarian minister.

8, 5, 14, 18, 25 3, 12, 1, 25. An American statesman.

23, 9, 12, 12, 9, 1, 13 5 3, 8, 1, 14, 14, 9, 14, 7. A famous minister.

23, 1, 19, 8, 9, 14, 7, 20, 15, 14 9, 18, 22, 9, 14, 7. An American author.

IV.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In peace, but not in war.
In east, but not in north.
In tea, but not in coffee.
In run, but not in walk.
In ice, but not in water.
In cloth, but not in lace.
In towels, but not in aprons.
In sea, but not in land.
In dark, but not in light.
In boat, but not in ship.
In year, but not in month.
My *whole* is a holiday in April.

V.

QUESTIONS IN HISTORY.

1. What hero of romance was a nephew of Charlemagne?
2. What Scotch hero was betrayed into the hands of the English and by them executed in 1305?
3. What great Englishman, a hero of mediæval times, plays an important part in "Ivanhoe"?

Answers to puzzles in the March number.

I. AUTHORS IN ANAGRAM.—1. Robert Burns. 2. Ralph Waldo Emerson. 3. Thomas Moore. 4. Leigh Hunt. 5. James Russell Lowell. 6. Thomas Hood. 7. Alexander Pope. 8. John Keats. 9. John Greenleaf Whittier. 10. Alfred Tennyson.

II. THE MISS GAME.—1. Misfortunate. 2. Misinform. 3. Misdemeanor. 4. Mistake. 5. Mississippi. 6. Misbehave. 7. Mismanage. 8. Misthinks. 9. Mistletoe. 10. Missionary.

III. HALF SQUARE.—
R O B I N
O V E N
B E G
I N
N

IV. BEHEADINGS.—1. F–ace. 2. F–act. 3. F–air. 4. F–arm. 5. F–arrow.

V. HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. The Rivals. 2. Adventures of Philip. 3. Middlemarch. 4. Chance Acquaintance. 5. Pride and Prejudice. 6. Love me Little, Love me Long.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

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Mrs. Emma M. Backus, whose former address was College Park, Georgia, is now residing at 232 First St. North, St. Petersburg, Florida.

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The regular monthly meeting of The Cheerful Letter Exchange, usually held on the first Friday of every month, will be omitted in May owing to the meeting to be held Thursday, May 27, 1915, in Channing Hall, 25 Beacon Street, at 11 A.M.

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